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THE CRAYON.

NEW YORK, JULY 11, 1855.

THE Editors of THE CRAYON would not have it understood that they endorse the extracts they make from books or papers in all cases. The opinions of men are often given as matter of interest, although THE CRAYON might dissent entirely from them.

In order to distinguish between the artistic and the non-artistic communications, the former will, hereafter, in all cases, be signed in black letter, the latter, as usual, in Roman capitals.

We should be obliged to our weekly exchanges if they would place us on the footing of the monthlies in the matter of notices.

Sketchings.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I find the following in the *New York Evening Post*, credited to the *Boston Post* of June 25th, and would like to know what you think of such detestable ideas of female beauty. I don't want to involve you in a discussion of the mooted question of "equality of intellect," but would like to be assured by a real judge of beauty, if it be an essential to its full expression that it should evince a lack of intellect. And one thing more—do you think that Bryant, who, I believe, is an acting editor of the *Evening Post*, would endorse such rubbish?

Yours truly,

ANIMA.

HIGH FOREHEADS.—The notion that high foreheads, in women as well as men, are indispensable to beauty, came into vogue with phrenology, and is going out with the decline of that pretentious and plausible "science." Not long ago more than one "fine lady" shaved her head to give it an "intellectual" appearance, and the custom of combing the hair back from the forehead probably originated in the same mistaken ambition. When it is considered that a great expanse of forehead gives a bold, masculine look—that from *frons* (forehead) comes the word "effrontery"—it will not be wondered at the ancient painters, sculptors and poets considered a low forehead "a charming thing in woman," and, indeed, indispensable to female beauty.

Horace praises Lycoris for her low forehead (*tenuis frons*), and Martial commends the same grace as decidedly as he praises the arched eyebrow. The artists in stone and pigments know very well that modesty and gentleness could not be made to consist with tall heads or extremely broad ones; and, accordingly, without a single notable exception, their women—unless made on purpose to represent shrews and the coarser class of cyprians—have low foreheads. But Nature, a higher authority, has distinguished the fairest of the sex in the same way; and foolishly perverse are they who would make themselves anew in the hope of improvement.—*Boston Post*, June 25.

We fully agree with "Anima," that the above extract is "rubbish," and would, with emphasis, throw back the "foolishly perverse" on Mrs. Partington. Ancient artists and poets were unconscious of the existence of any spiritual nature either in themselves or in their wives and daughters—even Plato, the noblest of them all, regarding woman only as a necessary evil. In those days, woman held the place only of a slave—a minister to the convenience and pleasure of the intellectual sex—entitled to no exercise of her own will or intelligence, so that the possession of either of those attributes, in a measure, unfitted her for her position, for which physical perfection alone was necessary. It is quite likely, that in those

times, as to a certain extent in these, the woman who, by chance, possessed an uncommon mind, would call out the exclamation, "effrontery!" by a vigorous exertion to occupy the place for which she felt herself to be fitted.

If our recollection of Horace is clear and just, we should hardly consider him, or one of his contemporaries, a judge of beauty, further than it was involved in the determining the relative perfection of two dancing girls, or the attractions of two "cyprians;" and most certainly should we never admit their voices in a discussion concerning that beauty which is merely the external manifestation of a spiritual perfection. The Horatian age was one of sensualism and utter moral degradation—scarcely, therefore, one whose estimate of woman, in any sense, is worth recalling as testimony in the question. With Christ and Christianity came the first recognition of the worth of woman, and the Christian artists and poets are those to whom we must look for the ideal of her. The Madonnas of Raphael and Da Vinci are nearer perfection than the Venus of Greek sculpture—the Lycoris of Horace we regard as a cyprian—the Beatrice of Dante as a saint.

But, even the Greek artists of the earlier and purer age had instincts pointing to better things, though they, perhaps, did not perceive their significance. There were three ideals of woman—the Venus or the sensuous—the Diana or the purely physical, and the Minerva or the intellectual—and let this be observed, that she is the only embodiment of pure and perfect wisdom which the Greek artist ever conceived. In all his ideals of man, he never shaped one as the type of absolute intellect. So that even debating the question from the Greek point of view, intellect, as an element of female beauty, is older than Phrenology. More than that, the very low forehead admired by the Romans, is found only in the Art of the most degraded and sensual ages. The Venus of Milo, the most perfect of the antiques of its type, has, at least, a medium forehead, the Diana rather more, and the Minerva, in the best examples, a head which any nineteenth century woman would acknowledge as fine and noble.

We believe that it would not be difficult to anticipate the position THE CRAYON would take in such a question. We regard beauty as merely the appearance indicating a conformity of the external to the spiritual-ideal, and that whatever may be the mere physical regularity of a face, it is not beauty, unless it is expressive of the mental qualities of the individual; so that where that regularity of feature which should indicate a beautiful nature, has lost its significance in consequence of the ugliness which bad passions have given that spirit, it becomes a falsehood, and gives us pain instead of pleasure—it is false beauty. Every one possessed of spiritual sympathy must have felt this, and have seen, also, that in many faces which originally were not beautiful, the action of the soul has so moulded and chiselled the features that they become expressive of the highest beauty, which is the appearance of spiritual ex-

cellence giving shape to the mere matter of which the features are composed.

If, then, a high forehead, evincing intellectual power, is inconsistent with such moral action, or prevents that spiritual perfection of which we have spoken, it is a defect, otherwise not; and, if it indicates that kind of intellectual power which assists the moral nature to arrive at its full perfection by the exercise of right reason, it is an addition to the beauty of its owner.

BOSTON ATHENÆUM.

THE exhibition of the Athenæum for this year is an unusually interesting collection of works of Art. The addition of the Beethoven, the group by Crawford, and the statue of Judge Story to the sculpture gallery, and the Titian, so called (which, whatever may be the conclusion as to its originality, is a fine piece of color), and Claude, with a Cuyp, the genuineness of which we are in no wise disposed to doubt, the Dante and Beatrice, and Hamlet, of Scheffer, together with the collection of our own artists, to which a room has been devoted, give the exhibition an uncommon variety and interest.

Of the statues alluded to, we shall speak at length as soon as we can find time. The Dante and Beatrice, of which we have spoken already, like all gentle and elevated works, grow upon us, but cannot, we think, be classed with the Temptation, or the Francesca da Rimini. There is a clever picture, by Hunt, of the morbid manner, so popular in France—an earnest, though affectedly feeble peasant group, by the French Millet—a couple of the dreary Boddingtons—thousandth repetitions of the same fact—and a few foreign pictures of less importance.

The collection of American artists comprises a large South-American landscape by Church, perhaps the best of his works, though not so good in color as the Sunrise in the Cordilleras, in the Academy exhibition, two landscapes by Gay, one of which, a Swiss scene, is a most artistic picture, excellent in composition, even if a little quaint, and harmonious in color with most admirable aerial perspective, a pleasant little Kaatskill picture by A. B. Durand, Tait's "Prairie Fowl," noticed in the Philadelphia exhibition, William Hart's "Vermont Scenery," from the N. A. D., which, by the way, appears to much better advantage in the Athenæum than it did in New York, Cropsey's Peace and War, Huntington's Maries at the Sepulchre, and some others of interest.

R. S. GREENOUGH has commenced the model of his statue of Gov. Winthrop, of which we gave notice some weeks since. It is in a sitting posture, with the hands clasped, resting on a Bible, which lies open on his knees, on which, also, is seen the Charter of Massachusetts. We are disposed to like it still better than the Franklin, though it is impossible to judge it justly from the small model. The costume is the Puritan garb. The hair parted in the middle, and the sweet, grave expression of the slightly wasted face, with the lines of thought and feeling marked on it, give an unusual force

and interest to the work. We have rarely seen a head in sculpture in which so much individuality and elevation were combined. Mr. Greenough intends leaving for Europe shortly. His studio will be at Paris.

We were gratified to see, at the same time, a medallion portrait of Com. Perry, executed by Miss Freeman, a pupil of Mr. Greenough's, we believe, a work of most excellent promise, full of character, and delicate in execution. The fair sculptor is a new aspirant for fame, and gives evidence of a talent which Boston would do well to encourage generously.

THE AMERICAN WHITE HEAD OR BALD EAGLE.

In whiling away an evening, we shall be excused by our readers if we occasionally turn from the strict line of agricultural advancement, to give a notice of things not familiar, as of old, but still interesting to the lover of Natural History. Among the most prominent of these, is that truly American bird, adopted as our national emblem, the White Head Eagle.

This majestic bird is still found along the inhabited sea-shores throughout the United States, and on the great rivers, and lakes of the interior; but in numbers much less than in the earlier settlements, where it had long held its abodes. It is described with great eloquence, and at much length, by both Wilson and Audubon, in their American Ornithologies; and from them we learn that it is a predatory creature, preying chiefly upon the spoils of others, and possessing few of the noble qualities attributed to it by tradition, or that would recommend it as the national emblem of a magnanimous people. For many years a family of White Head eagles have held a domicile on our farm, just below Lake Erie, on the Niagara, where successive families of young have been reared and taken their flight. The Niagara has ever been a favorite resort of the Bald Eagle. Early travellers mention them as abounding, for miles, around the cataract. We have never, to our knowledge, suffered from their depredations; although often detecting them preying upon the dead fish which have floated to the shores of the river, or been left by the fishermen. We have always regarded them with complacency, as one of the interesting family of wild birds, that for ages have dwelt around a spot which, from its peculiar accordance with their natural habits, has been their chosen home.

As no more than a single pair of eagles usually occupy a nesting ground, the boundaries of which may extend a mile, or more, either way, the family that hold dominion over our place have been in constant possession ever since we first knew it, near twenty years ago. The young hover about for the first year, and usually disappear for some other region the next spring, or at a year old. They seldom breed till they acquire the white head and tail, which is at about three years of age. At the approach of the pairing season, in April, they usually leave the river-shore for their nest in the woods, only going out for the purpose of food, until the young are large enough to leave the nest with them. They then loiter about their usual hunting-grounds, preying on the spoils of other birds, or the dead fish and carrion lying along the shores. After the first deep fall of snow in the winter, we have frequently found three or four, and sometimes more, of them sitting together on the high branch of a dead tree, where, if on horseback, or with a team of horses or oxen, they can be very nearly approached without alarm—indeed we have rode on horseback within an hundred feet of them, while they looked down upon us with great complacency. They will so sit for a whole day, and only move off at night to their roosting-place in the woods. During the winter they hover about the river-

shore continually, and in severe weather are often seen floating down the stream on a cake of ice, devouring a fish, the body of a gull, or duck, which they have captured, or have found killed or wounded by some hunter. Almost every winter some of the young eagles have been shot by the hunters, and occasionally one has been caught from the nest and taken to the neighboring city, as a pet or curiosity.

The writer once had an encounter of this latter kind, and as it was, in its results, somewhat of an adventure, we shall record it. When about eighteen years old, spending some time in the vicinity of one of the great lakes, one fine May morning we went with a companion down to the shore where a fisherman had put up a shanty, and with his wife and an infant child had taken up their summer residence. On our way down, and about a hundred rods from the water, in the topmost branches of an enormous oak, we spied an eagle's nest, and as the old eagles were wheeling about it, we concluded that the nest had either eggs or young within it, and which of the two we soon determined to ascertain. As our companion was a middle-aged man, and had no special taste for climbing, the adventure was left to me alone. The tree on which the nest was built had no limbs for thirty feet or more from the ground, but, fortunately, a smaller tree near it had been felled, and its top lodged midway up among the branches of the oak. Ascending the fallen tree, I soon reached the oak, and catching the huge limbs above me, I swung up on one after another until I stood on one a few feet beneath the trio of branches on which the nest lay. During my ascent one of the eagles, with vociferous cries, often wheeled within a dozen feet of my head; but, like other youngsters, as I had at the time quite as much courage as conceit, I stood in little fear of an attack. Well posted on a strong limb, with a near branch to hold on by, I looked into the nest. It was built of strong, heavy sticks laid crosswise, perhaps two feet in thickness from bottom to top, and four or five feet wide on the surface, covered with long, dry grass and leaves. About midway on the nest lay two young eagles, one somewhat larger than the other, about the size of half-grown goslings, and covered with the same sort of down, in color and appearance. Close by them lay two or three dead fish, half covered with blue-bottle flies, and giving off an intolerable stench. With a stick, which I drew out of the lower part of the nest, I tried to poke one of the young towards me; but they turned up their claws in defiance, with a sort of hiss, and edged further away. During this time one of the old eagles had left the premises altogether, while the other still kept wheeling and diving around, but approached no nearer than within a few feet of me, as before. After a while my continued poking at the young ones so exasperated one of them, that he seized my stick so firmly with his claws, that I drew him within reach. Determined to hold divided empire with the old eagles in the possession of their young, the next process was to get the bird to the ground without damage, as I had no sack or basket in which to deposit and let him safely down; but like other youngsters, who are seldom at a loss for expedients in mischief, a plan was soon invented. Taking off my hat, coat and vest, and laying them on the adjacent limb, my shirt was rapidly drawn over my head, the sleeves tied together at the wristbands, and thrown over my neck, the skirts bound into a knot, thus making a sack, and the open collar and bosom forming its mouth. Into this *con amore* receptacle our bellicose "Young America" was rapidly thrust, my outer garments replaced, and, flushed with victory, I made a rapid descent down the tree. No triumphant plunderer ever felt prouder of his trophy than I, and like the kilted Highlander in Rob Roy, I could sing:

"The eagle, he was lord above,
And Rob was lord of all below!"

I took the eagle down to the fisherman's hut, and after spending an hour or two, began to consider what to do with the young ruffian I had so wantonly caught, for I had neither a suitable place nor provisions on which to keep him, and wisely concluding that the *second*, if not the better part of valor, was discretion, I gave him to the owner of the hut for his own pastime.

I saw no more of the eagle for some weeks, when I again visited the fisherman, and found the young, tawny-looking thing an enormous bird, lounging about the door, and grown stout and saucy from generous treatment, and the fish garbage on which he had been profusely fed.

The next report heard from the young savage a few weeks after, was near being a tragic one. The wife of the fisherman having occasion one day to go to the shore, a few rods distant, after a bucket of water, while there she heard a scream from her child, which in her caution she had placed upon the bed when she left the room. Rushing back, she found the child prostrate on the floor, screaming with terror and agony, the eagle on its breast, with one claw transfixed into its face, and the other, as she approached, turned up, with open beak, in defiance at the mother's approach. With the quick energy of a woman in extremity, she struck the eagle off with her foot, and caught up the child, its face badly cut and bleeding, and deposited it at once in a place of safety. This done, an axe lay at the door, and that eagle *died*, probably as sudden a death as ever malefactor did on execution of any sort whatever. The little sufferer, after a few week's careful attention, recovered of its wound, but with a lasting scar on its temple.

That was the first and the last of the race that we ever attempted to tame, and long will the bald-eagle "tower" over our homestead in his "pride of place," ere we shall seek to disturb his authority.

The quill of the bald-eagle is peculiarly hard and elastic, and to those who prefer a quill to a metal pen, like ourselves, we commend their use, when they can be obtained. We have long used them.—*American Agriculturist*.

We give the following extract from a private letter, which will be found of interest. We invite to it the special attention of our friends in Baltimore, as it contains some hints, which, proceeding from one of the highest professional authorities in the country, they will know how to turn to account.

I have enjoyed the journey to Washington very much. In Philadelphia I visited many of the artists with great pleasure, and was sorry not to have more time there. With Sully I had a long and most delightful chat. He is looking very well and painting actively. On his easel was a charming portrait of a lady, full of his characteristic grace. Our friend C— passed much time in showing us the lions, and we spent an evening at his father's most agreeably.

I was disappointed to find that Haydon's "Christ Entering Jerusalem," was not in Philadelphia. I thought it belonged to the Pennsylvania Academy of Arts, where we used to see it together.

At Baltimore all was new to me. The part of the town about Monument Square is quite aristocratic and imposing. We went to the top of the monument, and were well repaid by the noble view, as we sat enjoying the breeze in the shade of the colossal statue, for the day was sultry. The Cathedral pictures interested me. The "Descent from the Cross," by Guerin, is a very fine picture—well composed—well drawn and expressive. I am afraid they do not

take all the care they ought of this most valuable work. It seems to me one of the best of Guérin's, and one which, if the French could possess, they would put in a place of honor in a grand saloon of the Louvre. As it is, decay appears to be destroying it—whether owing to the walls being damp, or to fires, or to whatever cause: it ought to be inquired into. The pendant corresponding in position, near the great entrance—St. Louis burying the body of a young man, is, I judged, by Gros. I could find no name of the artist on the work. Generally the French painters sign their names in bold characters. This, too, is a thoroughly well painted picture—forcible, powerfully modelled, and impressive. In color it is not so good, perhaps, as the Guérin, being a little heavy and blackish in the shadows. Another picture struck me as very well painted—"The Charge to Peter"—mostly copied from Raphael's Cartoon, only a little varied in design from that, but remarkably well executed. This, too, was in a bad light, and leaning back against the wall, the base of the picture resting on the top of a confessional box (if I remember rightly). All the dust and dirt, of course, collects fast on the surface in this way. The top of a painting should always lean a little forward, which both protects the surface and gives a better view of it. Mr. William Gilmor gave me an order to see his collection, which is very choice in cabinet pictures—a large landscape by Cole, a wild scene of mountains, running water, and torn and tossing trees, struck me very forcibly. The tone is very rich and the execution vigorous. Our time was short in Baltimore, and we lost much of it in fruitless efforts to find acquaintances and others to whom I had letters. Mr. Gilmor has about finished a large hotel, on the site of his late uncle's house, and near Barnum's. At Washington we were domesticated at Gen. T—'s. Hospitality, taste, kindness—all that we could wish for, this circle of well-beloved friends gave us. The usual sights we saw, of course. The Patent Office, the Smithsonian, the squares and statues, &c.

The extension of the Capitol is progressing on a grand scale, under the superintendence of Capt. Meigs, of the U. S. A. engineers. The same officer has charge of the water-works about to be constructed, and the enlargement of the Post Office, and all these public works requiring the most thorough science, with practical experience, Capt. M. is entrusted with because of the confidence felt in his genius, conscientiousness and energy. The contractors who have been so long accustomed to amass large sums by these jobs for Government, are in dismay. Capt. M. sifts to the bottom every offer for marble, work, &c., watches closely all the details of construction, examines strictly to a farthing every account, and is determined that, as far as lies in his power, all shall be done in the best manner. Hundreds of workmen are busy in cutting the white and grey marble into columns, capitals, &c., and there is no *sham* allowed; all is thorough, solid, and complete. Some of the casts of figures for the pediment, modelled by Crawford, arrived while we were there. They are life-like and characteristic, and are to be cut in marble on the spot. Two bronze doors, also by Crawford, in the style of the gates of the baptistery at Florence, will be cast abroad, I believe. Rogers, also, is commissioned to execute another door with a series of bronze alto-relievos, from the story of Columbus' life. A Roman painter, Brumidi, is decorating one of the new committee-rooms with frescoes. The one already finished by him in a lunette, is Cincinnatus called from the plough—a good composition. There are vast rooms, corridors, domes, panels and niches in this new part of the Capitol, offering a noble field for the Arts both of painting and sculpture. Those spaces should be filled with the works of American artists, and re-

main a monument of the Arts of our time. We want a *Fine Arts Commission*, to offer prizes, open the field to competition, and select the ablest men born on the soil [qu., or *naturalized* on it? Ed.], to adorn the Capitol with great works, in marble and colors. It would be a strong stimulus, and in the course of a few years, would of itself educate and bring into public view many men of genius. D.

—The Leader.

SUMMER STUDIES.

To a friend who complained that he could not study in June.

WHY shouldst thou study in the month of June
In dusky books of Greek and Hebrew lore,
When the Great Teacher of all glorious things
Passes in hourly light before thy door?

There is a brighter book unrolling now;
Fair are its leaves as is the tree of heaven,
All veined, and dewed, and gemmed with wondrous signs,
To which a healing, mystic power is given.

A thousand voices to its study call,
From the fair hill-top, from the waterfall;
Where the bird singeth, and the yellow bee,
And the breeze talketh from the airy tree.

Now is that glorious resurrection time,
When all earth's buried beauties have new birth,
Behold the yearly miracle complete,
God hath created a new heaven and earth!

No tree that wants his joyful garments now,
No flower but hastes his bravery to don;
God bids thee to this marriage feast of joy,
Let thy soul put the wedding garment on.

All fringed with festal gold the barberry stands,
The ferns exultant clap their new-made wings,
The hemlock nestles broderies of fresh green,
And thousand bells of pearl the blueberry rings.

The long, light fingers of the old white pines
Do beckon thee into the flickering wood,
Where moving spots of light show mystic flowers,
And wavering music fills the dreamy hours.

Hast thou no time for all this wondrous show—
No thought to spare? Wilt thou for ever be
With the last year's dry flower-stalk and dead leaves,
And no new shoot or blossom on thy tree?

See how the pines push off their last year's leaves,
And stretch beyond them with exultant bound;
The grass and flowers with living power o'ergrow
Their last year's remnants on the greening ground.

Wilt thou then all thy wintry feelings keep,
The old dead routine of thy book-writ lore,
Nor deem that God can teach by one bright hour
What life hath never taught to thee before?

See what vast leisure, what unbounded rest,
Lie in the bending dome of the blue sky;
Ah! breathe that life-born languor from thy breast,
And know once more a child's unreasoning joy.

Cease, cease to think, and be content to be;
Swing safe at anchor in fair Nature's bay;
Reason no more, but o'er thy quiet soul
Let God's sweet teachings ripple their soft way.

Soar with the birds, and flutter with the leaf;
Dance with the seeded grass in fringy play;
Sail with the cloud; wave with the dreaming pine,
And float with Nature all the live-long day.

Call not such hours an idle waste of life;
Land that lies fallow gains a quiet power;
It treasures from the brooding of God's wings
Strength to unfold the future tree and flower.

So shall it be with thee, if restful still
Thou rightly studest in the summer hour;

Like a deep fountain which a brook doth fill,
Thy mind in seeming rest shall gather power.

And when the summer's glorious show is past,
Its miracles no longer charm the sight,
The treasured riches of these thoughtful hours
Shall make thy wintry musings warm and bright.

Andover, June 22.

H. B. S.

—Independent.

SKIES.—Turner's transcendent power of expressing atmospheric phenomena more than atoned for eccentricities that would have ruined a lesser man; and Constable spent entire summers in painting skies from Nature. In a letter to a friend dated October, 1821, he says:—"I have done a good deal of skying, for I am determined to conquer all difficulties, and that among the rest. That landscape painter who does not make his sky a very material part of his composition, neglects to avail himself of one of his greatest aids. I have often been advised to consider my sky as a white sheet thrown behind the objects. Certainly, if the sky is obtrusive, as mine are, it is bad; but, if it is evaded, as mine are not, it is worse; it must, and always shall, with me, make an effectual part of the composition. It will be difficult to name a class of landscape in which the sky is not the key-note, the standard of scale, and the chief organ of sentiment. You may conceive, then, what a white sheet would do for me, impressed as I am with these notions, and they cannot be erroneous. The sky is the source of light in Nature, and governs everything; even the common observations on the weather of every day are altogether suggested by it. The difficulty of skies in painting is very great, both as to composition and execution; because, with all their brilliancy, they ought not to come forward, or, indeed, be hardly thought of, any more than extreme distances are; but this does not apply to phenomena, or accidental effect of sky, because they always attract particularly. I may say all this to you, though you do not want to be told that I know very well what I am about, and that my skies have not been neglected, though they have often failed in execution, no doubt from an over anxiety about them, which will alone destroy that easy appearance which Nature always has in all her movements."

The studies Constable made of skies, were in oil, on large sheets of stiff paper, and on the back of every one are memoranda, of the date, the time of day, the direction of the wind, and other remarks; for instance,—"Sept. 6th, 1822, looking S. E.; 12 to 1 o'clock, fresh and bright between showers; much the look of rain all the morning, but very fine and grand all the afternoon and evening."—*Leslie*.

REMBRANDT.—With respect to the more hateful charge that he was a miser, it may be noticed that among the very few things known of him, it is certain that about ten years before his death, all he possessed was sold to satisfy the claims of a mortgage. Misers do not become bankrupts, and the inventory of his property shows that he possessed a very large collection of works of Art, comprising specimens of all the schools of Europe. He had also many objects of natural history, proving, if proofs were needed, that whatever might be his fondness for money, his love of Art and of Nature was greater. It is remarkable, also, that between thirty and forty of his own pictures were on his hands, besides a far greater number of his sketches, which makes it probable that the patronage he received was not so constant as it has been represented; and the sale which took place of his house and property may have given rise to the story of his pretending to be dead, in order that his works might be sold.—*Leslie*.